

Focus on Farming Conference X

Speaker Biographies

Welcoming Remarks



Linda Neunzig

Linda Neunzig (Emcee) – Linda Neunzig is the owner of Ninety Farms, a 50-acre sustainable farm in Arlington WA. There she raises all natural grass-fed USDA beef and Katahdin lamb for Seattle area restaurants and local farmers markets. Linda has attended "Terra Madre" in Turin, Italy three times as a US delegate for Slow Food USA. Linda was also one of five farmers chosen from across the United States to represent the American Farmer at the New York City Meals On Wheels benefit in July of 2008 and was featured in Gourmet Magazine as one of the producers. In 2008 Linda was awarded the "Women Who Inspire" award by the National Women's Chef and Restaurateurs Association. Farming is not Linda's only profession; she is also the Agriculture Project Coordinator for Snohomish County. There she is a part of the county's Economic Development team providing assistance to farmers as well as leading the Snohomish County Focus on Farming conference, the Agriculture Sustainability project, the county's centennial farms project, a first ever Western Washington wine competition at the Evergreen State Fair, leading the creation of a year-round farmers market, as well as many other agriculture-related projects.



John Lovick

John Lovick – John Lovick is more than just the Snohomish County Executive, a position to which he was appointed on June 3, 2013. Most important to Lovick is his role as the proudest husband, father and grandfather. Prior to becoming Executive, Lovick served in the U.S. Coast Guard and spent 31 years as a Washington State Patrol trooper, five years as a Mill Creek city councilmember and nine years as a state Legislator representing the 44th District. Lovick currently volunteers in his community and sits on the Sound Transit Board and on the Puget Sound Regional Council. He lives in Mill Creek with his wife.



Fred Jarrett

Fred Jarrett – King County Deputy Executive Fred Jarrett oversees and directs the work of the executive branch of County government, including all its departments, operations and policy development. He is also head of the Executive Leadership Team. His responsibilities include leading the Executive's Reform Agenda, and creating a single management system focused on improved performance and transparency for citizens and stakeholders. Previously a state senator, Jarrett also served four terms in the state House of Representatives, after stints as Mercer Island Mayor and as a city council and school board member. Mr. Jarrett has also had a 35-year career at The Boeing Company.



Pat McCarthy

Pat McCarthy – Pat McCarthy was elected Pierce County Executive in 2009. Prior positions Pat held include Pierce County Auditor and Deputy Auditor, Administrator and Adviser for the Interdisciplinary Arts and Sciences Program at the University of Washington, Tacoma, and School Board Director for the Tacoma School District. Pat is married to John McCarthy, Superior Court Judge and has four children and six grandchildren. She received a B.A. from the University of Washington, Tacoma. The Cascade Land Conservancy awarded its Innovative Conservation Project Award to Executive McCarthy and PCC Farmland Trust for their collaboration on the Orting Valley Farm project, which preserves a 100-acre farm in perpetuity.

Keynote Speakers



Will Allen

Will Allen – Will is an urban farmer who is transforming the cultivation, production and delivery of healthy foods to under-served urban populations. As the son of a sharecropper, former professional basketball player, ex-corporate sales leader and longtime farmer, he is recognized as a national leader in urban agriculture and food policy. After a brief career in professional basketball and a number of years in corporate marketing at Procter & Gamble, Will Allen returned to his roots as a farmer, using his retirement package to purchase a plot of inner-city land with greenhouses, where he established and functions as the CEO of the country's preeminent urban farm and non-profit organization, Growing Power.

At Growing Power and in community food projects across the nation and around the world, Allen promotes the belief that all people, regardless of their economic circumstances, should have access to fresh, safe, affordable and nutritious foods at all times. Using methods he has developed over a lifetime, Allen trains community members to become community farmers, assuring them a secure source of good food without regard to political or economic forces.

In 2008, Allen was named a John D. and Katherine T. MacArthur Foundation Fellow “genius grant,” only the second farmer ever to be so honored. He is also a member of the Clinton Global Initiative, and in February 2010, he was invited to the White House to join First Lady Michelle Obama in launching “Let’s Move!”—her signature leadership program to reverse the epidemic of childhood obesity in America. In May 2010, Time magazine named Will one of Time 100 World’s Most Influential People. In 2011, Allen was named one of the World’s Most Powerful Foodies by Michael Pollan and Forbes Magazine in its World Power Issue and received the NEA Security Benefit Corporation Award for Outstanding Service to Public Education in 2012 for his work with children, teachers and schools.

Allen also experienced an illustrious career in sports. In 1966, he was a member of the Richard Montgomery High School State Championship Basketball Team and named to the Washington Post’s All-Metro Basketball Team, the first player ever to be named three times in the history of the award. As a high school All-American basketball player, he received over 100 scholarship offers to colleges and universities.

In 1967, Allen became the first African-American basketball player at the University of Miami Florida and one of Miami’s all-time leaders in scoring and rebounding.

Post-college, Allen played professionally in the American Basketball Association and then for a Belgian team in the European Professional League.

Allen was inducted in the Atlantic Coast Conference Hall of Legends in 2010, and in 2011 received the highest honor that can be bestowed to a collegiate athlete, the Theodore Roosevelt Award from the National College Athletic Association, his name enshrined at the NCAA Hall of Champions in Indianapolis, Indiana.

On May 10, 2012, Will Allen became a published autobiographer of the book, *THE GOOD FOOD REVOLUTION: Growing Healthy Food, People, and Communities* (Penguin/Gotham Books).

In the Fall of 2012, Will Allen was the first ever inductee into the Richard Montgomery High School Hall of Fame. Richard Montgomery is Allen's high school alma mater in Rockville, MD. He lives with his wife in Oak Creek, WI.



Rod Brooks

Rod Brooks – Rod is the V.P. and Chief Marketing Officer for PEMCO Mutual Insurance Company. “Northwest Marketing Guy.” As the PEMCO campaign suggests, he’s a lot like you. And perhaps... A little different as well.

As a youngster, Rod grew up watching local television favorites like Stan Boreson, Wunda Wunda, Captain Puget and Brakeman Bill. All were carried into his family home via the four local stations, a roof-mounted antenna, and a black and white television set with magical tubes that worked about 75% of the time. In more recent years, Rod had the chance to reunite with the Northwest’s most iconic childhood character of all – J.P. Patches – as part of the PEMCO NW Profile campaign. He says it was just as awesome as at 55 as it was at 5 or 6.

Like many of us, Rod grew up right here in Snohomish County (Lake Stevens) where his parents and relatives raised and grew much of their own food, owned and managed commercial berry farms, and labored in gardens and orchards that sent crops of fruit and vegetables to local markets and canneries.

After high school, Rod attended Washington State University and became a member of the Alpha Gamma Rho – a fraternity whose mission is to make better men and through them a better agriculture. Perhaps it was today’s session that Rod was being prepared for.

Rod has enjoyed tremendous success during his career in sales, marketing, and business development roles since graduating with a bachelor’s degree in communications from WSU in 1975. He is known for his creativity, leadership, and ability to transform vision into effective corporate strategy and unique implementation plans.

In 1999, Rod took the marketing helm at PEMCO Mutual Insurance Company. With the role came the opportunity to help transform an analytical and operations-based organization – with a predominantly commoditized product – into a dynamic and market-driven organization. Now, 14 years after joining the company, Rod calls the insurance business one of the biggest marketing challenges he's faced, and he views PEMCO's current campaign as one of his most rewarding.

Rod has served in numerous volunteer leadership capacities and is especially proud of his long standing service to Washington DECA. His service and contributions were recognized in 2009 when he was presented the Washington DECA Award of Merit – the organizations highest recognition for volunteer service. In 2012, Rod was presented the Communication and Leadership Award by Toastmasters International

Leadership & Community Participation:

- Board of Directors and Past Chairman, Word of Mouth Marketing Association
- Past President, Marketing Communications Executives International, Seattle
- Board of Directors and Past Chairman, Washington DECA
- Dean's Advisory Board, Washington State University's College of Education
- Professional Advisory Board, Murrow College of Communication, Washington State University
- Advisory Board, School of Business, University of Washington
- Executive-Student Mentor Programs, Seattle University and Washington State University

Speakers for Workshops and Sessions



Amy Allison

- **Amy Allison** – Amy is a Shareholder and has been an attorney with Anderson Hunter Law Firm since 2003. Amy assists families and individuals with all aspects of estate and trust planning, from basic Wills, Trusts, Powers of Attorney, and Health Care Directives, to more complex trusts and sophisticated wealth transfer strategies. Amy's practice includes advising clients on elder law and guardianship issues, as well as probate and trust administration. She also helps individuals and business owners with real estate transactions, business formations and transactions, and business succession planning. Amy is a native of Nebraska and enjoys spending time on her family's ranch in Texas, which has been in her family since 1856.



Carlos Avena

- **Carlos O. Avena** – Carlos is the Quality Assurance Manager at Willie Green's Farm in Monroe, WA. He worked with Chip Brown and owner Jeff Miller to develop the GAP and HACCP operational plans for the new packing facility so that the new federal food safety standards could be met. His decades of experience in export operations and fruit and vegetable production provide invaluable insight to international trade issues and food safety standards. An honorary member of the Mexican NAPPO team, Carlos represented food processors in negotiations of phytosanitary regulations in North America. Carlos has been on the leading edge of GAP standards in conventional farming, maintaining that edge as industry standards became more complex. This year, Carlos has driven Willie Green's Organic Farm's food safety program to Global Food Safety Initiative certification. Carlos holds a B.S. in Horticulture from BYU.



Patrice Barrentine

- **Patrice Barrentine** – Patrice has 20 years of non-profit experience working directly with clients and stakeholders problem-solving barriers to success. She was in the natural foods grocery business for 10 years, working with agricultural producers to increase their market share by developing pricing, displays that sell, and new value-added products. In her 4 years at WSDA's Small Farm Direct Marketing program, she developed the 2010 Small Farm Direct Marketing Handbook, a CSA Program for State Agencies, Savor WA – a culinary agritourism program, and the Farm Wisdom Video Series.

In 2012, she served as Lean Coordinator for WSDA's Deputy Director, facilitating process improvement for WSDA programs that create efficiencies, empower workers, and create better customer service from Organic Certification to Hop Inspection. She is an advisor to the Washington State Farmers Market Association Board, serves on the Preservation and Development Authority Council for Pike Place Market, and has served as WSDA's Small Business Liaison, represented WSDA's

Director at the Governor's Job Creation and Economic Recovery Sub-Cabinet, and the Governor's Lean Leaders Sub-Cabinet. Based in Olympia, Patrice offers expertise in Regulations and Marketing for Direct Marketing Farmers and is pleased to roll out the 2013 Small Farm Direct Marketing Handbook at Tilth.



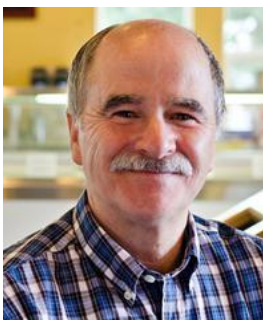
Dorie & John Belisle

- **Dorie Belisle** – Dorie and her husband John founded BelleWood Acres in 1995 to grow Jonagold apples. They are now a fully integrated farm not only growing, but also processing and marketing their fruit. They grow over 21 varieties of apples on 31 acres, including Honeycrisp, Gravenstein, Zestar, Tsugaru, and Jonagolds. In 2012 they built a 14,000 sq. foot facility to house their retail store, bistro, bakery and distillery. They sell their fruit under the Salmon Safe Label. Dorie and John are also involved in protecting local Ag lands and improving water quality in Whatcom County. They are members of Whatcom Farm Friends and Dorie is on the Board of the Nooksack Salmon Enhancement Association.



Neil Bell

- **Neil Bell** – Neil is the Community Horticulturist for the OSU Extension Service in Marion and Polk Counties, based in Salem. He works with homeowners as well as landscape and retail nursery clientele on plant problem diagnosis. In addition he has conducted a number of plant evaluations, primarily for drought tolerance and adaptability to the maritime Pacific Northwest since 2000.



Barry Bettinger

- **Barry Bettinger** – Barry and Shahnaz Bettinger founded Snoqualmie Ice Cream in Maltby, WA in 1997. The Maltby location is home to a fully sustainable manufacturing plant that creates ice cream for established in-house brand of pints, custom ice cream mix and other custom flavors for ice cream shops and restaurants in the Northwest. Snoqualmie Ice Cream makes the smoothest, richest, most perfect ice cream by never compromising the best ingredients and handcrafting the ice cream in small batches. Most ingredients come from the plant's mini-farm and other local sources, which ensure a fresh, "true pint."



Chris Benedict

- **Chris Benedict** – Chris is currently a regional agriculture specialist for Washington State University based in the Bellingham, WA office. His background and experience includes both an MS and BS in plant and soil sciences from the University of Vermont and almost three years at Cornell University as a research support specialist.



Chip Brown

- **Chip Brown** – Chip is the General Manager of Willie Green's Farm in Monroe. For 25 years he has been in the construction and information technology industry. Transitioning to the agriculture industry in 2012, Chip has supervised and guided Willie Green's to leading food, production and operation standards including GAP and HACCP. A new packing facility meeting new food safety regulations has just been completed. Willie Greens, established in 1987 by Jeff Miller, started as a quarter acre plot of leased land in Woodinville, which supplied eight local restaurants with baby lettuce, salad greens and herbs. Now located in Monroe, the family-owned farm has grown to 55 acres and produces 50 to 60 varieties of vegetables and berries available at farmers markets, Whole Foods and other outlets throughout the Seattle area.



Andrew Dykstra

- **Andrew Dykstra** – Andrew is a partner of Feed Your Farm which grows and sells barley sprouting equipment. Andrew feeds his own Holstein organic dairy cows barley sprouts. Grain has been eliminated, alfalfa hay has been diminished. Andrew started sprouting barley when grain became more money per ton than his milk per ton.



Marianne Elliott

- **Marianne Elliott** – Marianne is a plant pathologist at the Washington State University (WSU) Puyallup Research and Extension Center. She does research on diseases of woody ornamental and forest plants. Most of her research is related to biology and management of *Phytophthora ramorum*, the cause of Sudden Oak Death.

- **Brad Gaolach** – Brad is a Washington State University Extension Community Sustainability Specialist working in the Community and Economic Development Program. He has a Ph.D. in entomology from the University of Washington and has worked on agricultural sustainability issues in the Puget Sound region for many years. Many of his programs have helped urban dwellers gain better access to locally produced foods.



Paul Gleason

- **Paul Gleason** – Paul is a resource conservationist and farm planner with the USDA-NRCS in Snohomish County. He has a BS from The Evergreen State College with a major in natural resource management, and minor in sustainable agriculture. His career with NRCS has taken him to every corner of the state, and Paul has had the opportunity to assist all types of agriculture operations from "big ag" to small, direct market vegetable operations. His passion is helping producers meet their goals while protecting our natural resources.



Chris Guntermann

- **Chris Guntermann** – Chris is a sales rep working with Horticultural Services, Inc. He provides expertise to greenhouse and nursery customers as a distributor of greenhouse structures, equipment, and energy systems. Bringing to the industry over 38 years of wholesale and retail horticultural experience in engineering horticultural environments.

- **Tim Hohn** – Tim is the Chair of the Edmonds Community College Horticulture Department and has instructed since 1995. Previously, he has worked as a curator at the Bronx Zoo and at the University of Washington's Washington Park Arboretum and Center for Urban Horticulture, where he also taught horticultural classes. He received a Masters in Public Garden Management from the University of Delaware in 1986. His recent book is titled Curatorial Practices for Botanical Gardens.



Ryan Holterhoff

- **Ryan Holterhoff** – Ryan is the Director of Marketing & Industry Affairs, Washington State Potato Commission. At the WSPC, Ryan is responsible for numerous duties for the WSPC including; working cooperatively with various state potato organizations, potato growers, agricultural commodity groups, private companies, media contacts, and other state agencies. Through these efforts, Ryan focuses on developing programs and materials to assist in promoting and educating the industry and public regarding key issues, activities and events impacting the Washington state potato industry and about WSPC's activities.



Susan Kerr

- **Susan Kerr** – Susan was Director of WSU-Klickitat County Extension for 17 years and now is the WSU Northwest Regional Livestock and Dairy Extension Specialist. Dr. Kerr was in private mixed veterinary practice for seven years and enjoys educating livestock producers about how to prevent problems and provide for their animals' best welfare.



Gayle Larson

- **Gayle Larson** – Gayle has been an urban vegetable gardener in the Pacific NW for over 15 years. A Certified Professional Horticulturist, she teaches vegetable gardening at Edmonds Community College, through local Parks and Recreation departments and as a WSU Kitsap Extension Master Gardener Volunteer Educator. She offers edible garden design, coaching and consultation services through her business, Dancing Raven Design. In her home garden, Gayle grows most of the produce her vegetarian household eats during the year.



Craig Mayberry

- **Craig Mayberry** – Craig is the owner of Heritage Lane Farms in Lynden, WA. They raise heritage breed pigs, sheep and poultry and have been operating for about 4 years. Heritage Lane Farm started using fodder for some of their feed in April 2012 and have been using it for all of their animals since that time. Craig will discuss the reasons for using fodder as part of their feed, as well as some of the challenges and benefits of using fodder.



Carol Miles

- **Carol Miles** – Carol is an Associate Professor in the Department of Horticulture at Washington State University, and is the Vegetable Specialist located at the WSU Mount Vernon Northwestern Washington Research and Extension Center. She specializes in vegetable crop production and has a strong interest in alternative crops and organic production. Carol has her Ph.D. in vegetable crops from Cornell University.



Jeff Miller

- **Jeff Miller** – Jeff began his journey as a farmer in 1987. His passion to grow the finest produce possible stemmed from his previous career as a chef. Willie Green's Organic Farm began on a humble quarter acre rented plot in Woodinville. With that quarter acre, Jeff supplied eight local restaurants with baby lettuce, salad greens, and herbs. Through years of hard work and patience Jeff has grown Willie Green's to be one of the leading local organic farms in the Northwest, producing 50 to 60 varieties of vegetables and berries on 60 acres. Fresh, local, organic Willie Green's produce will reach you through our ten farmers markets and various wholesale grocers in the Seattle area.



Linda Miller-Baldwin

- **Linda Miller-Baldwin** – Linda has been an employee of the state of Washington since 1989 and has worked in the Taxpayer Services Division for the last 15 years. Most currently, she is working in the Taxpayer Information and Education Section. Duties include responding to letters of determination, writing guides and publications, and conducting speaking engagements and workshops. Prior to state service, Ms. Baldwin worked as an accountant and employment manager. Linda is a graduate of Washington State University and the Evergreen State College Master of Public Administration program.
- **Jason Niebler** – Jason is the Director and Founder of Sustainable Agriculture Education. He conceived and developed the program while at Central Seattle Community College. With a second National Science Foundation multi-year grant, he moved the program to Edmonds Community College Department of Horticulture and expanded partnerships to include Everett and Skagit Community Colleges. From the beginning, he has had Washington State University as a partner.
- **Sarah Richards** – Sarah owns Lavender Wind Farm on Whidbey Island. In the 13 years she's been farming lavender she has developed many products, both food and non-food. She is a founding board member of the United States Lavender Growers Association and is on the Board of Supervisors of the Whidbey Island Conservation District. Her marketing skills are continually developing due to the need to teach people how to use lavender. Her interest in developing food products is growing, so she is now enrolled in a "Science of Cooking" class through Harvard via edx.org to expand her ability to create new offerings.



Kara Rowe

- **Kara Rowe** – Whether writing a 2,000 word article on today's farming practices, creating farm policy with Congressional staffers or producing a 30 minute outdoor television show, Kara Rowe has been an energetic and strategic planner who loves a challenge. A 4th generation farm kid who was raised on a wheat and cattle farm in the Wilbur-Creston area, Kara attended Washington State University and received her bachelor's degree in Communications in 2000. She has minors in both English and Political Science, with an emphasis in broadcasting. After eight years working in the television & media industry, Kara began working for the wheat industry in 2008 as a marketing specialist for the Montana Wheat & Barley Commission. In 2010 an opportunity to work for the farmers of her home state opened up and she's been working for the Washington Association of Wheat Growers ever since. She currently serves as WAWG's Director of Affairs & Outreach, which keeps her busy with both public relations and policy projects.

- **Susan Soltes** – Susan is the owner of Bow Hill Blueberries and a manager/marketer of the North Sound Food Hub. In 2011, she and her husband Harley, set out to revive the oldest blueberry farm in the Skagit Valley into the community center it once was. Going into their third season, the farm is now a vibrant Certified Organic You and We-pick that offers blueberries fresh, frozen, jammed, pickled, dried and ice cream from their farm store, the Bellingham Farmers Market, and to institutions such as Google, Amazon, the UW Medical Center, Seattle University, the Seattle Seahawks. They also run free camps to urban children to learn to pick, cook and eat real food; hire middle school students as pickers to give them an outdoor work experience; and is proud to say they pay their professional pickers fairly by letting them set the price. This past year Susan raised money with an Indiegogo campaign to open, and make free, the North Sound Food Hub that has aggregated and delivered over \$100,000 of produce, meat and dairy from family-farms in the Skagit Valley to underserved communities in the San Juan Islands, Bellingham and Seattle areas. For over 20 years Susan directed national television commercials and finds farming every bit as creative, interesting and fast passed.



Grace Sparks

- **Grace Sparks** – Grace teaches plant biology and biology courses in the Seattle Central Community College Biology Department. She earned a Ph.D. in Ecosystems Analysis at the University of Washington College of Forest Resources and a B.S. in Environmental Science at Allegheny College. Before beginning to teach at Seattle Central, she was a laboratory teaching assistant and a summer instructor at the University of Washington.
- **Claus Svendsen** – Claus is the Chair of the Skagit Valley College Environmental Conservation Department. Dr. Svendsen received his Ph.D. in wildlife ecology at College of Forest Resources, University of Washington and his Master of Science in wildlife management and conservation biology at Copenhagen University, Copenhagen, Denmark. He develops and teaches curricula for undergraduate education within natural resources, watershed management and sustainable agriculture.